

LOOKING BACK

50 years ago, Dr. Henry Pleasants Jr., district medical director, issued a warning regarding the existence of stagnant pools and swampy ground, which made ideal breeding places for mosquitoes, carriers of disease germs. He also warned that continued heavy rains had taxed the capacity of household sewage disposal systems and municipal systems, making them a potential health hazard.

"On account of the over saturation of the soil, it is inevitable that stagnant pools will remain in many areas and become the breeding grounds of mosquitoes. Where organic matter remains on the ground, it will breed flies," Pleasants said.

25 years ago, Anthony Lubrano, son of Mr. and Mrs. Domenick A. Lubrano of Coatesville, won the coveted \$10,000 Lukens Steel Co. Scholarship at the annual Coatesville Area Senior High School awards assembly.

Lubrano had maintained a straight A average during his four years in high school. He was captain of the CASH cross country team and a member of the track team. He was president of the Honor Society in his junior year, served on the Talaria staff, was a member of the Interact and Leo Clubs and director of programs or WCHS-TV.

10 years ago, three years after two Chester County school districts engaged in a bitter dialogue over prayer at baccalaureate services, the U.S. Supreme Court by default permitted student-led prayer at the ceremonies in three states by refusing to hear an appeal of a decision that protected the speech.

In 1990, graduation prayers in Downingtown and Owen J. Roberts delivered by local clergy were challenged by four individuals — two students and two parents. The ACLU filed suits on behalf of both parties in U.S. District Court.

The school district complied, shrugging off a court fight mainly for financial reasons.

Since then, members of the community — parents, students and clergy — had replaced the services with baccalaureate ceremonies of their own.

Compiled by Laura Fabiani of the Local News staff

Roosevelt makes park his bully pulpit

HISTORY

On June 19, 1904, Theodore Roosevelt became the first U.S. president in office to visit Valley Forge. The occasion was to deliver an address that would call attention to the need for a memorial chapel to honor George Washington, whose personal and perseverance during the winter encampment of 1777-78 made Valley Forge a turning point in the American Revolution.

Theodore Roosevelt became president in 1901. For the next seven years, he used the executive office as a "bully pulpit" for labor mediation, consumer protection, conservation, and international diplomacy. Skillfully orchestrating public opinion as an instrument of political power, the popular young president pursued his goals with a self-righteous, if not bombastic, and jingoistic flair.



William C. Kashatus

Among his passions was U.S. history. He was steeped in knowledge of the nation's past, having written several histories himself, and never failed to capitalize on an opportunity to advance his political goals by exploiting it. The creation of a memorial chapel at Valley Forge provided a wonderful opportunity to combine political persuasion with historical inspiration.

Roosevelt visited Valley Forge in June 1904 at the request of Philander C. Knox, at one time attorney general in his cabinet and then U.S. senator from Pennsylvania. Like Roosevelt, Knox was passionate about history as well as enhancing the tourist appeal of the state park, which bordered his own estate along Valley Creek. A small wooden-frame chapel had been erected along the park's outer boundaries nine months earlier, but was considered a temporary measure to house Valley Forge's Episcopalian parishioners until a more permanent structure could be built.

On Sunday, June 19, President Roosevelt visited the small barn board structure to stump for a permanent chapel



Photo courtesy of Valley Forge Historical Society

Rare image of the Washington Memorial Chapel which includes the original barn board structure at far right where President Theodore Roosevelt delivered the "Valley Forge Address" on June 19, 1904.

to memorialize Washington's courageous example at Valley Forge. His timing was impeccable — the date marked the 126th anniversary of the evacuation of Valley Forge by the Continental Army.

The morning's religious services were conducted by the Rev. Herbert J. Cook, the Rev. Harvey S. Fisher and the Rev. W. Herbert Burk, minister in charge of the Washington Memorial Chapel construction project. Afterwards, Roosevelt ascended the pulpit and delivered a brief but inspirational address, comparing the "two great crises in our national history" — Valley Forge and the Battle of Gettysburg.

"There have been other crises than those that culminated during the war for independence and the great Civil War," the president admitted. "There have been great deeds and great men at other periods of our national history. But there never has been another deed vital to the welfare of the nation save the two — the deed of those who founded and the deed of those who saved the republic."

Roosevelt went on to laud Washington for his self-sacrifice and beseeched his listeners to "learn the lesson of Valley Forge" by "steadily cultivating the quality which Washington and the Continental Army so pre-eminently showed during the winter at Valley Forge — the quality of steady adherence to duty in the teeth of difficulty, in the teeth of discouragement and even disaster; the

quality which makes a man do what is straight and decent, not one day when a great crisis comes, but every day, day in and day out, until success comes at the end.

"I congratulate you that it is your good fortune to be engaged in erecting a memorial to the great man who was equal to the great days," concluded Roosevelt. "To the man and the men who showed by their lives that they were indeed doers of the word and not hearers only."

On Washington's Birthday 1905, the first service was held at the partially completed

chapel. Fund-raising continued through the next decade and the Washington Memorial Chapel was completed in 1917.

Roosevelt had accomplished his mission.

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His column alternates with Barry Rabin's "You Can't Be Serious."

This week's Sunday movie listings will appear in the Panorama Section D of the Daily Local News.

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ON THE COVER

Lyman Perry Architects in Berwyn have designed a doghouse to look like a lighthouse for Arfitecture, the Chester County SPCA fund-raiser.

— Staff photo by Amy Dragoo

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